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TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Twelfth special session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 617th MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 6 May 1983, at 4 p.m.

President: Mr. HLAVATY (Czechoslovakia)

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The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

SEATING PATTERN AT THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE

1. Zambia, having been drawn by lot by the President, was selected to head the seating pattern at the sixth session of the Conference.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS (continued)

(b) ADOPTION OF THE REPORT ON CREDENTIALS (TD/B/956)

2. The PRESIDENT observed that, in paragraph 3 of the report of the Bureau on the credentials of representatives participating in the current session of the Board (TD/B/956), the reference to the Official Records of the General Assembly remained to be completed. The UNCTAD secretariat had been informed by the Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, at Headquarters, that the Official Records of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session were still being edited and had therefore not yet been circulated. The secretariat would reissue the report on credentials with the reference to the Official Records as soon as it received the necessary information from Headquarters.

3. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Board adopted the report of the Bureau on credentials.

4. It was so decided.

5. Mr. LI LUYE (China) said that his delegation reiterated the position which it had stated at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. He wished that fact to be recorded in the report of the Bureau.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONFERENCE AT ITS SIXTH SESSION (agenda item 2) (continued) (TD/B/L.665)

6. Mr. OSMAN (Somalia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, expressed appreciation to all those speakers who had reacted positively to the Buenos Aires Platform, as introduced by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina.

7. In their statements, a number of representatives had referred to the process of recovery that was supposed to be under way in their own countries, and had described how they intended to solve many of the problems of the world, and in particular those of the developing countries. The Group of 77 did not dispute the importance of the recovery in the developed countries and had in fact made it one of the main themes of the Buenos Aires Platform. However, what was central to the position of the Group of 77 on that question was that the reactivation of their own economies would contribute significantly to world economic recovery. The convincing facts, figures and arguments which the Group of 77 had presented in that regard, combined with the recent experience of the developed countries themselves, should make that proposition self-evident. He noted the failure of a number of representatives of developed countries, or groups of such countries, to recognize that central thesis.

8. The Buenos Aires Meeting had clearly outlined the objectives to be attained and the approach to be adopted at the sixth session of the Conference. In order to reactivate the global economy and accelerate growth and development in developing countries on a sustained basis, it was vital to adopt integrated and adequate policies in the interrelated fields of commodities, trade, money and finance. While standing by that position in its entirety, the Group of 77 was not calling on its partners from the developed countries to go to Belgrade on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. It was calling on the other groups of countries to join it in arriving at a common diagnosis of the problems besetting the world economy, in agreeing on the measures needed to resolve those problems, in defining common objectives and in taking practical action on as many of those measures as possible. In that context, he had been somewhat disappointed to hear that there was no need to consider additional measures for the least developed countries, because the programme for those countries had been adopted only a year and a half earlier. However, it had been precisely during that period that the economic conditions of those countries had deteriorated sharply.

9. Another major feature of the Buenos Aires Platform was the call for the revival of international co-operation and the reorientation and restructuring of international trading and financing systems. The developing countries placed emphasis on institutional changes not because they wished to wrest control of the institutions from the developed countries, but because they had reached the conclusion that drastic reforms and restructuring of the monetary, financial and trading system were eminently justified by current world economic circumstances. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD had reflected fully on that problem at the opening of the general discussion. In that connection, he had noted with surprise the remark made by one speaker that the developing countries were asking for commitments from one side only. As had been stated in many United Nations resolutions, the developing countries recognized that the responsibility for development lay primarily with themselves. That position was again reflected in the Final Document of the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77.

10. It was clear that the current deterioration and unpredictable external environment had exposed the limitations of the domestic economic policies of the developing countries. While they continued to formulate and put into effect their own programmes for the revitalization of their economies, the world crisis was of such magnitude that it called for a global solution in which all countries must play their part. UNCTAD VI should be seen in that light.

11. He expressed the hope that at the forthcoming OECD Ministerial Meeting, the summit meeting in Williamsburg and other meetings to be held before UNCTAD VI, it would be borne in mind that a number of recent phenomena had enhanced the perception of interdependence within the world economy and had brought out more clearly than ever before the growing interrelationships between national economies and between global economic issues.

12. The Group of 77, in accordance with the call for dialogue and consensus adopted at Buenos Aires, was ready to hold intensive consultations on the various issues prior to UNCTAD VI. Given the necessary political will on all sides, success would be achieved.

13. The PRESIDENT noted that the Board had concluded its consideration of the item.

MATTERS REMITTED BY THE BOARD AT ITS TWENTY-THIRD, TWENTY-FIFTH AND TWENTY-SIXTH SESSIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CONFERENCE AT ITS SIXTH SESSION (agenda item 3)

(a) PATTERN OF CONFERENCES: GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 35/10 OF 3 NOVEMBER 1980 (continued)

(c) DECISION 1983/101 OF 4 FEBRUARY 1983 ON THE BASIC PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL FOR 1983 AND 1984 (continued) (TD/B/L.661)

14. The PRESIDENT said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Board adopted the draft decision contained in document TD/B/L.661.

15. It was so decided.

(b) ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE (continued) (TD/B/L.664)

16. The PRESIDENT observed that the draft decision contained in document TD/B/L.664 was the result of deliberations within the Contact Group and of informal consultations held with the co-ordinators.

17. Ms. SRAMEK (Secretariat) pointed out that, in paragraph 4 of the French version of the draft decision the word "après" should be replaced by "avant".

18. The PRESIDENT said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Board adopted the draft decision contained in document TD/B/L.664.

19. It was so decided.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE BOARD (agenda item 6) (TD/B/L.660 and Add.1-4)

20. Mr. DUPOUY (Chile), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report of the Board on its twelfth special session (TD/B/L.660 and Add.1-4), said that unfortunately, because of lack of time, it had not been possible to consult the Friends of the Rapporteur on the structure of the report. However, chapter I had been examined informally by the delegations whose statements were reflected in it and he thanked them for their co-operation and understanding in accepting those texts.

21. In the final version of the report, if there was no objection by the Board, he would change the order of the statements in chapter I so as to conform to the normal UNCTAD practice. The draft report did not include the text of chapter II because no substantive discussion had been held in the plenary Board on the subitems under item 3. With the Board's customary authorization, he would prepare the chapter after the session in order to reflect the decisions taken at the current meeting.

22. The PRESIDENT invited the Board to consider the draft report.

TD/B/L.660

23. Paragraphs 1-73 were adopted.

TD/B/L.660/Add.1

24. Paragraphs 1-14 were adopted.

TD/B/L.660/Add.2

25. Paragraphs 1-51 were adopted.

TD/B/L.660/Add.3

26. Paragraphs 1-5 were adopted.

TD/B/L.660/Add.4

27. Paragraphs 3 (a) - (m) were adopted.

28. The report as a whole was adopted.

29. The PRESIDENT said that, before closing the current session, the Board should authorize the proper completion of its report. He read out the text of the proposed decision on the matter:

> "The Board authorizes its Rapporteur to complete the report with the proceedings of this final plenary, and, under the authority of the President of the Board, to prepare, in accordance with the guidelines set out in decision 259 (XXV), the report of the Board to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session."

30. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Board adopted the proposed decision.

31. It was so decided.

32. The PRESIDENT, summing up the work of the session, recalled that in resolution 245 (XXIII) the Board had decided to hold a one-week special session in conjunction with the twenty-sixth regular session in order to consider substantive proposals for action by the Conference at its sixth session and to advance negotiations on them. That decision had been reaffirmed by the Board in resolution 253 (XXIV).

33. The Buenos Aires Platform, which had been placed before the Board by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina, speaking as President of the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, had given all members an opportunity - far in advance of the Conference itself - to study closely the thinking of the Group of 77 on the issues before the Conference and to examine the specific proposals made in the form of resolutions. Most significant in the Platform was its unmistakable call to the partners in the negotiating forums for dialogue and consensus through understanding of each other's concerns.

34. He was pleased to note that at the current session of the Board the process of dialogue had begun and members had heard statements which were really comments on the Buenos Aires Platform by Norway on behalf of Group B, by the Federal Republic of Germany on behalf of the European Communities, by Group D and by several other delegations.

35. He drew attention to another document remitted to the Conference under Board resolution 262 (XXV), i.e. the informal text on trade relations among countries having different economic and social systems, and all trade flows resulting therefrom. He hoped that the document would be given due attention at the appropriate time.

36. In his opinion, those elements had transformed the entire negotiating environment, a transformation which he regarded as crucial to the success of UNCTAD VI. In the weeks ahead the dialogue would surely be continued in many forums. It would continue bilaterally and multilaterally as countries consulted each other, in official meetings at various levels, and unofficially as individuals met to exchange opinions. It was important that the dialogue should be continued since through dialogue members had reached some understanding. Evidence of part of that understanding was contained in a document before the Board containing agreed conclusions on the preparatory work for the sixth session of the Conference (TD/B/L.665), which he invited the Board to approve.

37. Document TD/B/L.665 was approved.

38. After an exchange of courtesies, the PRESIDENT declared the session closed.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.